

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 64 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 5, 13, 21, 31, 35, 43, 51 and 61 to 64 having been amended herein. Claims 1, 5, 13, 21, 31, 35, 43, 51 and 61 to 64 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 4, 31 to 34 and 61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,579,516 (Van Maren) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,530,856 (Dahod); Claims 5 to 12, 35 to 42 and 62 were rejected under § 103(a) over Van Maren in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,105,022 (Takahashi); Claims 13, 14, 17 to 29, 43, 44, 47 to 50 and 63 were rejected under § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,987,506 (Carter); Claims 15, 16, 45 and 46 were rejected under § 103(a) over Carter in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,937,409 (Wetherbee); Claims 21 to 27, 51 to 57 and 64 were rejected under § 103(a) over Carter in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,327,590 (Chidlovskii); and Claims 28 to 30 and 58 to 60 were rejected under § 103(a) over Van Maren in view of Dahod, and further in view of Takahashi. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a data processing method which includes the steps of (a) reading directory data corresponding to a directory in a file management system which manages files using a directory structure, (b) reading meta-data to be attached to the directory data, the meta-data corresponding to a file belonging to the directory, (c) appending the meta-data read in step (b) to the end of the directory data read in step (a), and (d) outputting as a single directory data file the entirety of the data obtained in step (c).

The applied art, namely Van Maren and Dahod, is not seen to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of amended independent Claim 1, particularly with respect to appending the meta-data corresponding to a file belonging to the directory to the end of the directory data corresponding to the directory, and outputting as a single directory data file the entirety of the appended meta-data and directory data. According to this feature, each directory file can hold meta-data corresponding to files that belong to its directory. In this manner, for example, a file search using meta-data is performed more quickly because the search can be performed by inspecting the meta-data for the directory without having to inspect the meta-data for each individual data file in the directory.

Van Maren is seen to be directed to a method for storing a set of files on a multi-volume media set, wherein when the set is online, the meta-data is separated from the data to improve online performance. (Van Maren, abstract; Fig. 4; column 2, lines 34 to 62). As stated in the Office Action, Van Maren is not seen to disclose or suggest appending meta-data corresponding to a file belonging to the directory to the end of the directory data, and then outputting as a single directory data file the entirety of the appended meta-data and directory data.

In this regard, Dahod is not seen to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Van Maren with respect to amended independent Claim 1. Dahod is seen to be directed to multimedia linking verification which is used to verify that all media links to media elements are still valid, and, if a media link is invalid, the user can add a link to the current search path of the media manager. (Dahod, abstract; Fig. 3; column 1, lines 58 to 67; and column 2, lines 1 to 12). Accordingly, the only “appending” that takes place in Dahod is when a media or external file is found in a search and then the path for the media or

external file is appended to search directory of the media manager. (Dahod, abstract; Fig. 3; column 4, lines 41 to 53). Although Dahod uses the word appending to add the search path for a media or an external file, nowhere is Dahod seen to append one set of data to another, much less to append meta-data corresponding to a file belonging to the directory to the end of the directory data, and then outputting as a single directory data file the entirety of the appended meta-data and directory data.

The other references are not seen to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Van Maren and Dahod with respect to amended independent Claim 1. Specifically, none of the references are seen to disclose or suggest append meta-data corresponding to a file belonging to the directory to the end of the directory data, and then outputting as a single directory data file the entirety of the appended meta-data and directory data. Accordingly, amended independent Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

In addition, amended independent Claims 13, 21, 31, 43, 51, 61, 63 and 64 include at least the feature of appending/attaching meta-data to the directory data, and are therefore also believed to be in condition for allowance for the same reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 1.

Amended independent Claim 5 is directed to a method of determining whether meta-data is registered in data of a directory data file, including the steps of reading a directory data file, and inspecting data of the read directory data file, from the end toward the beginning thereof, and distinguishing the meta-data included in the data by determining whether or not there is data written in a proper format for a predetermined data

writing language, so as to treat the meta-data as meta-data appended to a file belonging to the directory.

Of course, amended independent Claim 5 distinguishes meta-data when it is included in the data of a directory data file, and therefore presumes that meta-data has been appended to directory data.

The applied references, namely Van Maren and Takahashi, are not seen to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of amended independent Claim 5, particularly with respect to distinguishing the meta-data included in the data from the directory data file by determining whether or not there is data written in a proper format for a predetermined data writing language, so as to treat the meta-data as meta-data appended to a file belonging to the directory.

As mentioned above with respect to amended independent Claim 1, Van Maren is not seen to disclose or suggest having meta-data appended to directory data of a directory. In this regard, Takahashi is not seen to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Van Maren. In particular, Takahashi is seen to be directed to a structured text searching method in which sections of meta-data are distinguished by inspecting for start and end tags according to SGML protocol. (Takahashi, abstract; column 3, lines 50 to 67; column 4, lines 1 to 57; column 12, lines 63 to 67; and column 13, lines 1 to 3). Nowhere is Takahashi seen to disclose or suggest that meta-data is appended with another type of data, such as directory data, and that the meta-data is distinguished from the directory data, so as to treat the meta-data as meta-data appended to a file belonging to the directory.

Applicants submit that even if Van Maren and Takahashi were combined, for which combination no motivation or suggestion is seen, such a combination would not

teach the combination of features of amended independent Claim 5. Accordingly, amended independent Claim 5 is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

In addition, amended independent Claims 35 and 62 are directed to a data processing device and a memory medium, both of which substantially include the foregoing features of amended independent Claim 5. Accordingly, amended independent Claims 35 and 62 are also believed to be in condition for allowance for the same reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 5.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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